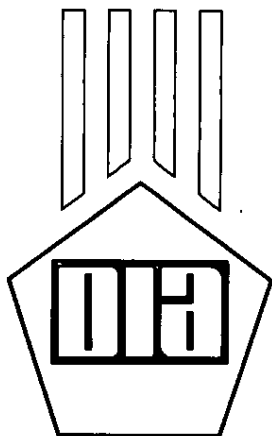


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North Korean Exercise Activity: Before and Since 1980 (U)

OCTOBER 1984

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**North Korean Exercise Activity:
Before and Since 1980 (U)**



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PREFACE

(S/RELROK) The North Korean People's Army training exercises have demonstrated a distinct change in activity since 1980. [redacted] then concludes with an assessment of the current status of North Korean military training exercises.

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(U) The product manager would like to acknowledge the extensive support and inputs by the following analysts: [redacted]

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SUMMARY

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[REDACTED] Nationwide
exercises have not occurred since December 1983, but they are likely to resume
after the ongoing ground force reorganization and redeployment has been
completed, probably during the winter of [REDACTED]

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1. BACKGROUND

(S/RELROK) The regular North Korean military forces are known collectively as the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). The NKPA is the fourth largest Communist armed force and the sixth largest armed force in the world. The NKPA's army, navy, and air force components have equal status. The North Korean Army (NKA), is the largest of the country's three Services and comprises about 90 percent of the [redacted] personnel). Currently, it is composed of at least 12 corps: 8 with geographic responsibilities, 3 with functional responsibilities, and 1 that controls selected special purpose units nationwide. Its mission is to maintain the territorial integrity of the country and assist in internal security, civic action, and agricultural programs. Most important is the NKA's role of providing [redacted]

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[redacted] North Korean military training exercises have traditionally focused on developing and maintaining NKA combat readiness. The scope of training, however, [redacted]

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2. NORTH KOREA TRAINING EXERCISES (1960-79)

(S/RELROK) [redacted]

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[redacted] regional and progressed in a relatively predictable manner toward more complex, larger exercises throughout the training year. Usually from late spring through the summer, the ground forces engaged in small-unit combat training while air regiments emphasized basic flight proficiency. Most naval units were involved with routine sea and coastal patrolling operations as well as low intensity gunnery and air defense tactics.

(S/RELROK) From autumn through early winter, training and maneuvers gradually increased in tempo with army units conducting combined-arms exercises at regional training areas. For the most part, unit sizes were limited to battalions of infantry, armor, or artillery. On occasion, elements of a regiment or brigade were observed in the field. Air and naval forces as well as air and army units, were reportedly on maneuvers in contiguous areas and possibly engaged in coordinated exercises. From mid-winter through early spring, all Services of the NKPA were invariably active, curtailing or ceasing training only on national holidays.

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(S/RELROK) Neither the winter training exercises conducted during

nor those

were assessed as

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nationwide exercises. The most likely reason why the North Koreans may have decided against conducting nationwide exercises for these periods is the current reorganization and redeployment of at least part of the NKA. Other possible reasons include:

- An attempt by Pyongyang to cool down tensions on the peninsula as a result of adverse international publicity caused by the Rangoon bombing incident.
- An attempt to eliminate the shortcomings noted during the three previous nationwide exercises.
- An attempt to prevent exacerbating an already difficult national economic situation by calling up reserves from a dwindling manpower pool, directing limited transportation resources to support non-productive military activities, creating additional fuel shortages, and disrupting industrial production schedules.

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